

JUNE NEWS LETTER

San Francisco, June 9, 1952

ALL P. F. E. EMPLOYES:

Carload perishable shipments originated on P.F.E. contract lines:

|                 | <u>1952</u> | <u>1951</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| April           | 24,418      | 26,174      |
| Jan-April, inc. | 119,078     | 124,742     |

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SUPER-GIANT CARS: On May 14th the first of 75 new super-insulated large cars was inspected at Roseville. These will be equipped with conventional ice bunkers, the new electric fans, large sliding doors, steel floor racks, etc. 40 of these supers are expected to be delivered by the end of June; the balance of 35 in July.

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There is enclosed copy of a second article on P.F.E. Car distribution, this one covering operations on contract lines.

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CAR SITUATION: Loading requirements, with the exception of frosted foods (for which large heavily insulated cars are needed), were protected without delay or shortage during May. Our estimates of June loading are quite heavy particularly for Kern County potatoes, Salinas lettuce and Imperial and Yuma cantaloupes, and if realized will require the fullest efficiency in car handling in every district to meet demands. Foreign car assistance is now being obtained but it is of the utmost importance that full use be made of PFE equipment and that no unreasonable surplus be permitted to accumulate in any district while we are accepting foreign cars to protect loading in other districts.

Shortages of large heavily insulated cars for protection of frosted foods continue and, unfortunately, are expected to prevail throughout June. Everyone can help relieve the situation by seeing



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insulated large cars was inspected at Roseville. These will be equipped with conventional ice bunkers, the new electric fans, large sliding doors, steel floor racks, etc. 40 of these supers are expected to be delivered by the end of June; the balance of 35 in July.

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frozen foods (for which large heavily insulated cars are needed), were protected without delay or shortage during May. Our estimates of June loading are quite heavy particularly for Kern County potatoes, Salinas lettuce and Imperial and Yuma cantaloupes, and illustrated with reduced the fullest efficiency in car handling in every district to meet demands. Foreign car assistance is now being obtained but it is of the utmost importance that full use be made of PFE equipment and that no unreasonable surplus be permitted to accumulate in any district while we are accepting foreign cars to protect loading in other districts. Shortages of large heavily insulated cars for protection of frozen foods continue and, unfortunately, are expected to prevail throughout June. Everyone can help relieve the situation by seeing



to it that cars are handled without delay. In this connection, our new standard equipment with its improved insulation, is a very satisfactory substitute for frozen food loading when supers are not available. Shipments reach destination in excellent condition, the only objection to their use appears to be in connection with the lighter, more bulky commodities where their inability to handle the minimum loads specified under the tariffs handicaps the shipper to some extent.

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CROP CONDITIONS: The peak of the potato movement from the Bakersfield area has been reached and shipments are now running over 700 cars a day via Southern Pacific and Santa Fe combined.

Cantaloupes. The deal is starting in the Imperial and Yuma Valleys although there has been a temporary slow-up due to cooler weather. The peak is expected this month.

Salinas lettuce is still running heavy. The express movement of strawberries and cherries is heavy at present and due to the shortage of express refrigerators we have been called upon to supply many PFE standard refrigerators.

First cherry shipments from the Northwest will be from the Milton-Freewater district about June 10. It is estimated there are 450 cars in the Yakima Valley, 160 in Hood River-The Dalles section, 75 in Milton-Freewater area and 10 cars at Lewiston.

Spanish onion crop in the Milton-Walla Walla District is expected to get under way about June 12 with a total movement of about 250 cars. The crop seems to be in very good condition.

Of considerable interest is the new Idaho land being brought into production in the Minidoka-Hunt-Murtaugh areas. Conservative estimates are that some 3500 acres are coming in this year, about half



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new standard equipment which is installed, is a very satis-  
factory substitute for the old loading system. When cars are not satis-  
fied, shipments reach destination in excellent condition, the only  
objection to their use appears to be in connection with the winter  
seasonally conditions where their inability to handle the situation  
leads to difficulties. Under the conditions, the shipper is more satis-  
fied.

GROUP CONDITIONS: The peak of the potato movement from the  
Rocky Mountain area has been reached and shipments are now running over  
200 cars a day. The Eastern railroads and States are combined.  
Central States. The best is starting in the Imperial and Yuma  
Valleys although there has been a temporary slow-up due to cooler  
weather. The peak is expected this month.  
Shrimps lettuce is still running heavy. The express movement  
of strawberries and cherries is heavy at present and due to the fact  
that express refrigerators have been called upon to supply many  
of the standard refrigerators.

First heavy shipments from the Northwest will be from the  
Illinois-Texas area about June 10. It is estimated there are  
450 cars in the Yuma Valley, 160 in the Imperial Valley, 100 in the  
Yuma-Texas area and 10 cars at Brawley.  
Spanish onion crop in the Yuma-Texas area is  
expected to get under way about June 15 with a total movement of about  
250 cars. The crop seems to be in very good condition.  
Of considerable interest is the new Idaho land being brought  
into production in the Idaho-Texas area. Considerable  
attention has been given to this area and it is hoped that some 2500 cars are being put in this year, about half



of which may be in potatoes and other perishables. All of this land is watered by deep wells.

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SAFETY: We are now beginning another car icing season. In the past at ice plants as well as car service decks employes have sustained serious and, in some cases, permanent injuries from this type of work. In the various operations involved in car icing there are hazards; however, through this season I am counting on all supervisors who have anything to do with this service to see that the safety of our men will be a prime factor, both from the standpoint of operation and education along safety lines, to make this season free from personal injuries to our employes.

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## P. F. E. CAR DISTRIBUTION

This is the second article on Car Distribution. The first, covering the function of our eastern organization, was included in News Letter of May 6th. There was a purpose in first outlining the steps followed in the East to meet loading requirements on our lines in the most efficient manner and to keep our cars gainfully occupied on other lines when not currently needed to protect our own loadings; By first describing the handling in the East it was felt our Western organization could better appreciate the subject as a whole and become more familiar with the effects that changing conditions on our lines have on the entire structure of car handling and the factors related to it.

All of you know that efficiency of car handling can only be based on sound estimates of production of perishable and semi-perishable products that can be expected to move in refrigerated cars, and planning in advance to meet such requirements. Based on years of experience and taking into consideration a great many long range factors such as prospective marketing conditions, weather forecasts, and changes that may have taken place in methods of packing, processing or transportation, from one section or year to the next, estimated requirements are set up each year for the following year's shipments. Such estimates are segregated by main districts on our lines, by months, and by general conditions. When it is considered that estimates so compiled include shipments from some field crops that have not even been planted at the time but will undergo seasonal plantings throughout the year, it becomes apparent that these estimates involve considerable research work by district representatives and complete analysis by everyone handling the subject, from field representatives through all supervisory officers, before final figures can be agreed upon. These estimates are watched closely and are re-submitted twice a month. In addition, of course, individual sectional crop estimates are issued prior to shipping seasons and close-up estimates covering four-week periods, by weeks, are issued weekly. All estimates are revised as the year progresses. The efficiency and promptness with which estimates are rendered, and revised as conditions change, is vitally important in moving empty cars to loading sections via the most direct route. In addition to the bearing estimates have on car distribution it must be remembered that they also greatly influence the important long-range programs of our Refrigeration and Car Shop Departments where operations must coincide with car movements and loading if over-all efficiency is to be attained.

After estimates are established an analysis is made of car requirements throughout the year based on the number of PFE cars that will be in service each month of the year, the rate of loading, and anticipated "turn-around" or return of such equipment. Then, by estimating the foreign cars that will be received on our lines under load (and which we can expect to use when made empty) a good picture is obtained of the total cars we can count on to protect estimated loadings by months. From this we can readily determine the number of additional foreign empties we will need, and the periods involved, to supplement our own equipment during peak shipping months. Plans are made early with foreign car owners to obtain the required assistance as needed and if available. This is watched closely throughout the year to make sure that foreign cars are not taken before absolutely necessary or in excessive numbers as, of course, it is desired that



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All of you know that efficiency of car handling can only be based on sound estimates of production of perishable and semi-perishable products that can be expected to move in refrigerated cars, and planning in advance to meet such requirements. Based on years of experience and taking into consideration a great many long range factors such as prospective marketing conditions, weather forecasts, and changes that may have taken place in methods of packing, processing or transportation, from one section or year to the next, estimated requirements are set up each year for the following year's shipments. Such estimates are segregated by main districts on our lines, by months, and by general conditions. When it is considered that estimates so compiled include shipments from some field crops that have not even been planted at the time but will undergo seasonal plantings throughout the year, it becomes apparent that these estimates involve considerable research work by district representatives and complete analysis by everyone handling the subject, from field representatives through all supervisory officers, before final figures can be agreed upon. These estimates are watched closely and are re-submitted twice a month. In addition, of course, individual sectional crop estimates are issued prior to shipping seasons and close-up estimates covering four-week periods, by weeks, are issued weekly. All estimates are revised as the year progresses. The efficiency and progress with which estimates are rendered, and revised as conditions change, is vitally important in moving empty cars to loading sections via the most direct route. In addition to the bearing estimates have on car distribution it must be remembered that they also greatly influence the important long-range programs of our Refrigeration and Car Shop Departments where operations must coincide with car movements and loading if over-all efficiency is to be attained.

After estimates are established an analysis is made of car requirements throughout the year based on the number of PRR cars that will be in service each month of the year, the rate of loading, and anticipated "turn-around" or return of such equipment. Then, by estimating the foreign cars that will be received on our lines under load (and which we can expect to use when made empty) a good picture is obtained of the total cars we can count on to protect estimated loadings by months. From this we can readily determine the number of additional foreign empties we will need, and the periods involved, to supplement our own equipment during peak shipping months. Plans are made early with foreign car owners to obtain the required assistance as needed and if available. This is watched closely throughout the year to make sure that foreign cars are not taken before absolutely necessary or in excessive numbers as, of course, it is desired that



PFE equipment be given full employment. On the other hand, developments must be watched closely so that foreign assistance is obtained in time to reach loading sections when such help is necessary to protect peak requirements. The foregoing briefly outlines some of the long range steps taken to protect our business.

Throughout the year a large force dealing with car distribution and located at strategic points on our owning lines is kept busy maintaining the proper balance between supply and demand and in keeping all concerned informed of current conditions and forecasts of future developments having to do with perishable loading requirements on the lines on which we are obligated to furnish cars, which include such lines as the Cotton Belt, the Pacific Railroad of Mexico, and the National Railways of Mexico, in addition to S. P., U.P., W.P., and their short line connections. Field representatives, i.e., the forces of our Agents, District Agents, General Agents, and Superintendents, continually keep abreast of growing and shipping progress and information is given currently to Assistant General Managers responsible for their respective territories. Information in turn is furnished the Vice President & General Manager, and the Car Service Department in Chicago, and instructions are issued setting up movement of empties via gateways and roads in keeping with business to be protected and the status of car equalization balances via the various gateways and railroads.

In planning for sufficient cars to protect seasonal movements and setting up movements via the gateways, a number of things must be taken into consideration in addition to the question of foreign car assistance and equalization of empty with loaded movements through gateways and over the various lines. It is necessary to build up a good working supply in loading areas in advance of shipping seasons. The ratio of supply to loading differs from section to section, depending upon track facilities for holding surplus cars, the capacities and ability of our shops to condition cars, distances and running times from shops to loading sections, the relative location of loading sections with respect to gateways where cars will be received, and of course the ability of the railroads to consistently handle the daily movement required to meet peak loading. Each of these factors has a bearing, not only from a long-range standpoint but also on a monthly, weekly, and daily basis, so that business may be protected as efficiently and as economically as practicable.

As may be realized, car distribution is no hit-or-miss proposition, nor can an error in judgment be rectified entirely without harm in some direction. When movements of empty cars are set up via certain gateways in the west a long chain of events takes place extending into eastern territory, as outlined in previous News Letter. And when radical changes in conditions in western territory occur such changes are reflected in car handling in the east and throughout our system.

Rises and falls in temperature or heavy rains may mature, retard or destroy crop production to an extent requiring quick action in re-directing hundreds of empty cars. Changing marketing conditions can have a similar result. Railroad operating difficulties may necessitate temporary measures differing from the normal handling of empty cars into loading sections. All in all, we deal with perishable com-



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modities and moving units and it is of vital importance that careful long-range planning be done. It is of equal importance that current developments be watched closely and changing conditions recognized promptly. Only by so doing can full efficiency be reached in our operations, to our advantage financially, and without detriment to our owners.

After cars reach the actual loading districts it becomes the responsibility of the Superintendent, District Agent and Agent to direct cars to the ultimate user. Each commodity loaded must be considered a separate problem. Some cars must be iced before loading, others after loading. Some shipments are iced over the load itself, while still others move under ventilation or, during cold weather, under heater service. This phase of our operations requires the closest of cooperation with railroad forces and a thorough knowledge of each shipper's needs and requirements. And this is particularly true in times of car shortage when the car distributor together with local forces make the final allocation of cars to shippers.

You can see that a great deal of preparation and planning is done to get the proper number of cars into the producing areas, but unless the individual shipper gets the kind of car he wants, when and where he wants it, we have failed in our ultimate goal, which is a satisfied shipper.

The ability of our field men on the ground to seek out and evaluate crop prospects, their close contacts with the shipping public and local conditions, and the cooperation throughout the Car Service, Car Shop, and Refrigeration Departments, has been a source of constant satisfaction.

While the foregoing article gives little space to the function of our Car Shops in the car supply picture, without the shops we could not last a week, and it is hoped that we can devote at least one article in the near future to the very vital Car Shop operations.



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